96. Rs. 3,200 under "23—Medical—4—Leprosy relief—Dietary charges"

Rao Sahib Dr. T. Verghese *(Chief Medical Officer)* : I rise to move for an additional allotment of Rs. 3,200 under "23—Medical—4—Leprosy relief—Dietary charges". I request the House may be pleased to sanction the amount.

Demand put and carried

97. Rs. 2,48,080—0—0 under "12—(1) Forests A—1—b"

98. Rs. 1,012—0—0 under "12—(1) Forests B—8—a"

Mr. S. Venkateswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : I rise to move for an additional allotment of Rs. 2,48,080 under "12—(1) Forests A—1—b" and Rs. 1012 under "12—(1)—A—1—b". These amounts are repuired to pay of the collection charges and dearness allowance to the staff who are engaged in connection with the supply of firewood in the State. The idea of supplying firewood to the municipal towns is not taken up by Government with a view to derive any profit, and the charges levied on the firewood supplied cover only a royalty of Re. 1—8—0 per ton. The rest cost is collection charges and transport. I request the House may be pleased to grant these demands.

Mr. T. A. Ramachandra Ayyar *(Nellayi)* : May I know whether this amont is wanted to supply firewood to the people in towns? May I know whether any arrangement is made for the supply of firewood in the villages?

Mr. S. Venkateswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : The question will be considered when a real necessity arises for the supply of firewood to the villagers. As far as the towns are concerned, it is not proposed to meet the whole demand; but if Government hold stocks at specific rates, the black-marketting rates will automatically come down.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulm)* : May I know whether the Government has enquired into the conditions of the price of firewood in smaller towns like Kunnamkulam, Vadakkancheri, etc?

Mr. S. Venkateswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : Government have not made enquiries into the cost of firewood in those places.

Mr. C. V. Iyyu *(Kunnamkulam)* : Will the Government be pleased to enquire whether there is any necessity in those towns?

Mr. S. Venkateswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : The matter if represented, will receive attention.

Mr. Joseph Pettah *(Adur)*: What are the collection charges per ton so far as Trichur is concerned.

Mr. S. Venkateswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : Firewood is delivered in Trichur town at Rs. 14 and deducting the royalty of Re. 1—8—0 the rest goes to the collection and transport charges.

Mr. Joseph Pettah *(Adur)* : In the notes to the Standing Finance Committee it is mentioned as Rs. 10—8—0 collection charges. If that is true, Rs. 10—8—0 plus Re. 1—8—0 comes to Rs. 12.

Mr. S. Venkateswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : It requires further handling at the depot.

Mr. Joseph Pettah *(Adur)* : What would be the average of such contingent expenses per ton?

Mr. S. Venkateswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : It depends upon the number of times the firewood is handled. In Trichur Town it is possible to deliver firewood with one handling if arrangements are made for one lorry. In other cases, the firewood will have to be handled in the depot and ag ain it will have to be handled when re-issued. That will add to the handling charges.

Mr. Joseph Pettah *(Adur)* : What is the rate at which fire-wood is delivered when an order is made, per lorry ?

Mr. S. Venkiteswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : Rs. 50 for 3½ tons capacity lorry.

Mr. A. B. Salem *(Mattancheri)* : Will supply be made in full lorries if individuals require the same.

Mr. President : To individuals ?

Mr. S. Venkiteswaran *(Conservator of Forests)* : It is now being done in Trichur. Only a very few lorries are available.

Mr. K. Narayana Menon *(Mulakunnathukavu)*: Mr. President, Sir, I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Conservator, on the very helpful promise that he made, the serious difficulty that the villages close to Trichur, like Ramavarmapuram and Vilvattam and other villages suffer for want of fuel, and I would like to impress upon the Hon'ble Member for Forests the necessity for considering that case early and at the earliest moment at least to make it possible that the fuel stocks in the towns are made available to the villages also on payment, whatever may be the cost of transit.

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Mr. S. Venkiteswaran *(Conservator of Forests):* There is no restriction imposed with regard to sale of fuel at Trichur. Even villages around are supplied.

Mr. President: Does Mr. Ezhuthassan want to move his cut motion ?

Mr. P. Kumaran Ezhuthassan *(Vadakkancheri):* Yes, Sir. The cut is only to request the Government that they may be pleased to extend the operations mentioned in the notes explaining the demand namely supply of fire-wood to some special places to be extended to Vadakkancheri and similar places. I am conscious that this cut motion may smack of little of provincialism, but being a necessity which I know first hand, I do not hesitate to make a request before the Government with the hope that it will be suitably reacted.

Mr. S. Venkiteswaran *(Conservator of Forests):* Government are prepared to undertake the supply wherever there is real necessity.

The cut motion was, by leave, withdrawn

Demands put and carried

LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT BILLS

THE COCHIN PUBLIC HEALTH BILL

Mr. T. K. Nayar *(Minister for Rural Development):* Sir, I move that the Cochin Public Health Bill be read in Council.

Mr. M. Sivarama Menon *(Advocate-General):* Sir, I second it.

Mr. T. K. Nayar *(Minister for Rural Development):* The laws relating to Public Health now lie scattered in the Municipal Act and in various other independent and special enactments which are administerated by different authorities, *i.e.*, by the Municipal authorities and the Department of Public Health. This is not conducive to the efficient handling of problems concerning matters of public health. Again the public health activities of Government so far as rural areas are concerned are now being carried on by the Department of Public Health in virtue of the powers conferred on the Director of Public Health by the extension of certain sections of the Municipal Act to rural areas. The provisions of the Municipal Act, designed as they are to meet the requirements of towns, are, hon'ble members will not dispute, hardly suited to the conditions prevailing in rural areas. Further, the conduct of public health activities in the rural areas directly by the Public Health Department deprives Government of the advantages of the close co-operation and local supervision and control of the local bodies functioning in rural areas, which alone can be conducive to success. Now that the new Panchayat Bill proposes to re-constitute the panchayats with wider powers it behaves on Government to utilise their services in the furtherence of public health activities in rural areas by conceding to them certain powers of control and initiative. Again public health is not, hon'ble members will agree a matter to be left entire to local bodies and power must be left in Government to step in and co-ordinate the various public health activities if and when there is necessity for the same and to chalk out a general policy on which such activities are to be carried on without at the same time curtailing the powers already vested in the local authorities. The main object of the Bill is therefore to supply this element of coordination and to utilise the service of the local bodies to the maximum extent possible in so essential a matter as public health. The Bill is a very close adaptation of the Madras Public Health Act, but great care has been taken to avoid any conflict with the municipalities in the exercise by them of powers already vested in them. The Bill, I feel sure, will supply a longfelt want and I recommend this motion to the acceptance of the House, hon'ble members suggesting the lineson which they would like the Bill to be improved, for which an opportunity will be had at the Select Committee stage.

Mr. A. Eachara Menon *(Chittur-Rural):* Sir, the repurcussions of the Bill with that of the sister Bill which has gone into Committee, will be far-reaching than the Town Councils Act which the Government have kept in abeyance now. The Hon'ble Minister has stated that it does not touch the powers given to the Municipalities. Clause 11 says "every local authority shall provide its Health Officer with such clerical assistance, office accommodation, furniture, equipment, stationery and forms as may in the opinion of the Director of Public Health, be necessary for the proper conduct of the business of such Health Officer". Sir, can you not credit the Municipalities with common sense enough to supply their officers with these. Then comes the power to appoint persons to carry out the provisions of this Act. It is taken away from the Municipalities. The Government want to give the power to the Director of Public Health to boss over the Municipalities and the Government cannot believe the Municipalities to give clerks, office furniture, etc. That should be done by the Director of Public Health. I am sure that if the Minister thinks that such powers should be given to the Director of Public

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